

1957 Winnebago System Sturgeon Spearing Season Summary Report

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Lake Winnebago

Season Dates: February 11 – March 1, 1957
Season Length: 19 days
Bag Limit: 2 fish per spearer
Min Length: 40”
Shanty Count: 1,538
License Sales: 6,257
Harvest: 851 fish
Water Clarity: 14’
Mean Length: 56”
Mean Weight: 49 pounds
Fish >100 pounds: 15 (1.76% of harvest)
Ice thickness: 18-28”

Upriver Lakes (Lakes Poygan, Winneconne, and Butte des Morts)

Season Dates: February 11-15
Season Length: 5 days
Bag Limit: 1 fish per spearer
Min Length: 40”
Shanty Count: 859
License Sales: N/A
Harvest: 422 fish
Water Clarity: N/A
Mean Length: 50”
Mean Weight: 27 pounds
Fish >100 pounds: 1 (0.2% of harvest)

The 1957 sturgeon spearing season was the first year with a reduced bag limit of 1 fish on the Upriver Lakes. The season was also limited to 5 spearing days. The reduction in bag limits and season length was intended to reduce harvest on younger fish, allowing them to reach older ages and larger sizes. The prevalence of a higher percentage of smaller, juvenile fish in the Upriver Lakes harvest still exists in modern spearing seasons. However, this is no longer a management concern as telemetry data collected in recent decades has demonstrated that the Upriver Lakes provide important juvenile rearing habitat, thus the higher proportion of smaller fish in the harvest relative to Lake Winnebago.